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ABSTRACT

Conducted by Nancy Brandt and Bernice Haney, this study looked at internal and external forces affecting educational change efforts in four schools of education. The study compared institutions with both high activity and staff involvement in program development to those with low activity and involvement. Data were collected through structured interviews. Interview responses in institutions in which there was active program development suggested that in these institutions personnel followed a sequence of steps to accomplish change, understood goals and priorities, had few difficulties with communication, were active participants in decision-making, were rewarded for efforts in development, and perceived the leadership of the college in a positive light. External factors (such as accrediting agencies, certification requirements, or court decisions) although not seen as major influences on development, were regarded favorably. Interview responses in institutions with low levels of involvement revealed that in these institutions there was no systematic approach to program development, goals and priorities were not clear, communication was one-way only, staff did not participate in decisions and were not rewarded for program improvement efforts, and college leaders controlled structure and rewards. External influences, although not major, were seen as negative. (Author/JM)

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A Systematic Approach to the Management of Program Development
In Educational Administration

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Introduction

Educational administration is operating in an arena that has grown in its complexity. Fortunately, there is a wider range of options and a greatly expanded knowledge base available to educational administrators as they confront the manifold task of directing the educational enterprise within a complex, pluralistic setting. Unfortunately, educational administration as a discipline has not always demonstrated the inclination to marshal all available resources or the total knowledge base in approaching the task of making education as effective as possible.

Leaders in the field of education have, as reported in educational journals, pointed to the fact that education in the United States is effective, as revealed in the statement

...cross-national data on educational achievement indicates that the U.S. educational system has clearly been responsive both to the rapid changes in society and to its basic democratic ideology. It has reached a larger proportion of its young people than almost all other nations, while its top 5% have attained the same high scores reached by nations that attempt to teach only a small fraction of their 18-year-olds.¹

By contrast, the popular press continues to report to the public, and the public reads and observes, that SAT and CAT scores and achievement in general are on the decline while disruption in public schools has increased.² Confidence in education in the United States, while still high compared to some other social agencies, has declined. There is much in American education in which educators can take pride, yet the dynamics of society places constantly new demands upon the system.

Change in our culture is inevitable. It is not the inevitability of change in our culture that is generally debated, but rather it is the question of the meaning of change and the implications for education that remains the paramount issue. For educational leaders there is a simple, but highly crucial dichotomy to consider: educational administrators must either learn to cope with and acquiesce to changes imposed upon them or they must learn the art and technology required to manage planned change.

If the management of change, as an option, is to be pursued, who will do it? In higher education the struggle for power and control ebbs and flows between administrators and faculty. The "... combination of an autonomous faculty and strong administrators creates high levels of tension within the institution as boundaries of authority and responsibility are continually being negotiated."³ In public school settings negotiations between teachers and administrators have, in some areas, reached a point that caused administrators to perceive "... contracts not as an administrative tool designed to improve the quality of education . . . , but as a document designed to undermine the role and authority of the principal."⁴ In the period of our history in which special interest groups bring pressure to bear on education from outside the structure, it is only to be expected the mood and perceived effectiveness of pressure strategies be manifest in behaviors internal to the structure of education. Thus it can be seen that the question of who will manage change, or prohibit or try to inhibit it, in education is an issue not easily resolved.

If the management of change is to move forward, who will determine the philosophical base upon which education is to function? Who will

set policy, goals and priorities for education? The question of education designed to meet the demands of the future as defined by Combs is in sharp contrast to the educational program that some advocates of back-to-basics would envision. Combs has stated that "We can never again hope to design a curriculum to be required of everyone." and that an "... educational system unable to predict the knowledge or behaviors demanded by the future will have to concentrate instead on producing persons able to solve problems that cannot presently be foreseen." Combs further states that schools will be responsible for teaching values which will be a framework and basis for choices.⁵ To work for program improvements that would take into account the position espoused by Combs would be to fly in the face of the prescribed dogma of various special interest groups. Leadership of the highest order in education will be required to resolve key philosophical issues.

Much of the leadership in the field of education and the accompanying determination and interpretations of educational philosophy has been abdicated by professional educators to persons serving in legislative and judicial capacities. Still more of the leadership function in the realm of goal and priority setting is being subsumed by special interest groups. These, and other forces, are generating a feeling of powerlessness in the minds of educational administrators at a time when strong leadership is absolutely essential.

If educational administration as a discipline accepts the rationale that change is inevitable and that it is better to be an architect of change than a reacting pawn, the question remains with respect to how will the needed change be accomplished. While change is inevitable, planned

change is neither inevitable nor easily accomplished. Planned change, designed and executed to achieve maximum progress toward specified goals and priorities, requires highly competent educational leadership. The complexity of planned change demands that educational leaders be thoroughly schooled and proficient in managing change as a process.

A coalition of the best educational thinkers, both professional and lay persons, is called for to 1) search out appropriate basic assumptions upon which education can function, and 2) clarify goals and priorities for education within our society. Once the key base for the nation's educational system is confirmed, professional educators will need to approach the task of designing programs which will be consistent with the philosophy and goals and thus move education, through expertly designed change processes, into a mode of operation that will be even more successful than that which has been known heretofore. Educational leaders will be called upon not only to design programs, but to implement programs which provide multiple options while maintaining the flexibility to adjust to the changing demands of a complex technological society. In this process, educators will be called upon to accept a greater degree of involvement in and with the community, or society as a whole. A greater emphasis will need to be directed to evaluation and the use of feedback data. In short, educational leaders are being called upon for greater understanding and sophistication in the management of change.

Evidence suggests that some of the approaches that have been utilized to bring about change have not always been as productive as desired.⁶ There is ample evidence to imply educators are susceptible to being seduced

by the most current bandwagon approach to program improvement. It is also of interest to note the number of "innovative" programs that have been embarked upon, with good intentions and high hopes but with an inadequate data base, and then after a relatively short span of years abandoned, again without adequate data. Interestingly, such abandonments of innovative programs have almost always been accompanied with a retreat to the program that was in place prior to entering into the innovative program--again without data to support the return to the previous program as being the best option.

Personnel in some institutions, both higher educational establishments and public school systems, demonstrate the ability to move into significant program improvement efforts with seemingly high levels of success. In contrast, many institutions in the field of education do not become involved with meaningful efforts to improve programs. In still other institutions, personnel have been involved in changing the store front and changing labels on old merchandise and thus avoiding being labeled as out of step with the current scene. Some institutions have the leadership to bring about change and some do not, to suggest the "change process in educational institutions should be studied, and formal mechanisms for the dissemination of information and for the application of research knowledge to teacher education practice should be developed."⁷

In an effort to examine the differences in schools of education where there were active and vigorous programs to foster change as contrasted to those in which there were little or no change or program development taking place, Brandt⁸ and Haney⁹ conducted a study to examine program development

as viewed through a composite, systematic educational change process which took into account both internal and external forces considered to have a potential impact upon changes.

Research Methodology.

This research, conducted by Brandt and Haney, utilized a modified ethnographic approach for data collection which employed the following steps:

1. the literature was reviewed pertaining to the change process and focused on materials from anthropology, sociology, agriculture, medicine, industry and education. From this review of literature, a base was derived from which a composite change model was identified. The composite change model, which encompassed a systems approach, constituted the construct from which data collection instrument was developed.
2. A survey was conducted to identify teacher training programs with relatively high levels of involvement in program development efforts, or change, and institutions in which there was a low level of involvement in program development.
3. A state college and a university in which there were reportedly high levels of program development were chosen to be involved in the investigation. A university and state college that, according to the survey were minimally involved in program development, were also chosen to be included in the study. Permission to gather information was acquired from staff members in the four selected institutions.
4. An interview schedule was developed, based on the composite systematic change process derived from the literature. The structure of the interview embodied internal and external factors to be examined to determine if faculty perceived a relationship or influence from such factors that related to program development. The instrument was piloted in two institutions of higher

education not involved with the study.

5. Each staff member in the four selected institutions was contacted and appointments set for conducting the interviews during the spring of 1980. On scheduled dates, all interviews were, with the permission of the interviewee, taped for later transcription. The investigators conducted the interviews and made notes regarding reactions of interviewees on a structured form which accompanied the tapes.

Table 1
Staff Size and Number of Interviews
in Selected Institutions

Institutions	Staff Size	Number Interviewed
Alpha University	98	26
Beta University	40	13
Delta State College	75	26
Gamma State College	51	18

6. Data analysis involved transcribing each interview tape in its entirety. Each investigator then drew from each transcription responses that pertained to either selected external factors (Brandt) or selected internal factors (Haney) related to the composite, systematic educational change process employed in this investigation. A modified ethnographic mapping technique was employed to categorize and analyze responses received from interviewees. The case study approach was then employed to describe the program development process as perceived by faculty members in their respective school of education.

Review of Related Literature

The literature dealing with the change process is relatively new. This is understandable, since it has been only within recent decades that the rate of change has accelerated to a point where it was recognized as a phenomenon worth receiving attention. Some of the earliest work dealing with change came from the field of anthropology. As anthropologists reviewed cultural confrontations which occurred in the New World they found access to studying cultural change. Barnett has identified the antecedents to change¹⁰ that provided a base for later studies which focused on selective borrowing of innovations that in turn lead to a knowledge base used to test change models in agriculture¹¹ and in medicine.¹²

Sociologists were able to extend some of the preliminary work regarding change that had been reported by anthropologists. From the field of sociology came the theory of geometrical progression referred to as the S-curve regarding the amount of time required for acceptance of an innovation. The geometrical progression theory was later applied to studies in agriculture, medicine and education.^{13,14,15,16} Research dealing with the time of adoption in education is one more illustration of change studies that relied upon the previous work accomplished in other disciplines.

Studies dealing with the importance of opinion leaders also grew out of the work done by sociologists, as did information related to studies of the frequency of change to population density. The work of Bowers which suggested "diffusion tends to reach the largest cities first and then proceeds to their tributary smaller cities"¹⁷ and that larger population areas tend to rely on mass media while in smaller communities a more intimate, personal

communication pattern exists, when linked with theories regarding the importance of opinion leaders, formed the knowledge base upon which Carlson did his study regarding the role of the school administrator and change.¹⁸

To understand and communicate knowledge of how change took place, Rogers examined the adoption process in agriculture.¹⁹ His work provided more information to the growing base of knowledge that was later to be applied to education. In the field of medicine there were various studies of the adoption process which focused primarily on the adoption of the Salk polio vaccine, water fluoridation and upon the topic of family planning.^{20,21} From both agriculture and medicine emerged models describing the change process.

As scholars began to apply the knowledge base regarding change to the field of education various change models, applicable to education, have emerged. The most common change models in education include (1) the Research, Development and Diffusion Model, (2) the Problem-Solving Model and (3) the Social Interaction Model.

Research, Development and Diffusion (R,D & D). Emphasis was placed on the origin of the innovation: the developer, not the user. The assumption was made that there were experts who were the developers of the innovation. Several works have contributed to the R, D & D models.^{22,23,24,25} The primary focus of each of these models was the development of an innovation, with less emphasis placed on application or evaluation.

Assumptions and characteristics of the R, D & D models have been reported by Havelock. First, there was a rational sequence of activities

which moved from research to development to packaging, before dissemination took place. Second, planning was conducted on a massive scale which produced coordination and a relationship between research and development. Third, there was a division of labor and a separation of roles and functions. Fourth, there was a specified passive consumer, who, once appropriately introduced to the innovation, was willing to accept it. Finally, these models suggest the acceptance of high initial development costs prior to dissemination.

The Problem-Solving (P-S) models, unlike the R,D & D models which emphasized the development of the innovation, were concerned with the user of the innovation. The user individually sought solutions or relied upon an outside source. The individual who assisted with the solution was referred to as the change agent. Before the solution could be effective, it was mandatory that the receiver realized the need and participated in the process. The Problem-Solving models were concerned with the elements of individual and group attitudes, interpersonal relations, and communication systems.

A common model among the problem-solving theorists was that of Lippit, Watson and Westley. Their model expanded upon and modified previous work in the area as they developed a seven phase process model which included:

- Phase 1: The client system discovers the need for help, sometimes with stimulation by the change agent.
- Phase 2: The helping relationship is established between user and agent and defined.
- Phase 3: The client's problem is identified and clarified.
- Phase 4: Alternative possibilities for change are examined; change goals or intentions are established.

Phase 5: Change efforts in the "reality situation" are attempted.

Phase 6: Change is generalized and stabilized.

Phase 7: The helping relationship ends or a different type of relationship is defined.²⁶

Social Interaction (S-I). This model was concerned with the social interaction or communication of the adopting group. One was not concerned with the durability or to what extent the adoption had occurred. Focus was on the individual's perception of and response to knowledge.

Previous authors have suggested the need for a synthesis of change models. Havelock alluded to a combination of change perspectives as "the concept of 'linkage' as a possible unifying and integrating idea."²⁷ Hall viewed change as an innovation-adoption cycle. This cycle consisted of extended periods of "relative calm and tranquility," considered to be equilibrium, which were followed by disequilibrium and "relatively short periods of intense innovative activity and disruption."²⁸ It was for the disequilibrium stage that Hall developed the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM). The CBAM considered the stages of change as well as the social interaction or communication of the adoption group. This interrelationship was an attempt to integrate the Problem-Solving models, and the Social-Interaction models.

Composite, Systematic Educational Change Process

For the purpose of conducting this research, a change model or process was developed which synthesized and integrated elements of previous models coupled with the systems approach. Integrally associated with this proposed change process were considerations of internal and external forces at play in the institution in which the nature of the change process was being

EXTERNAL FACTORS:

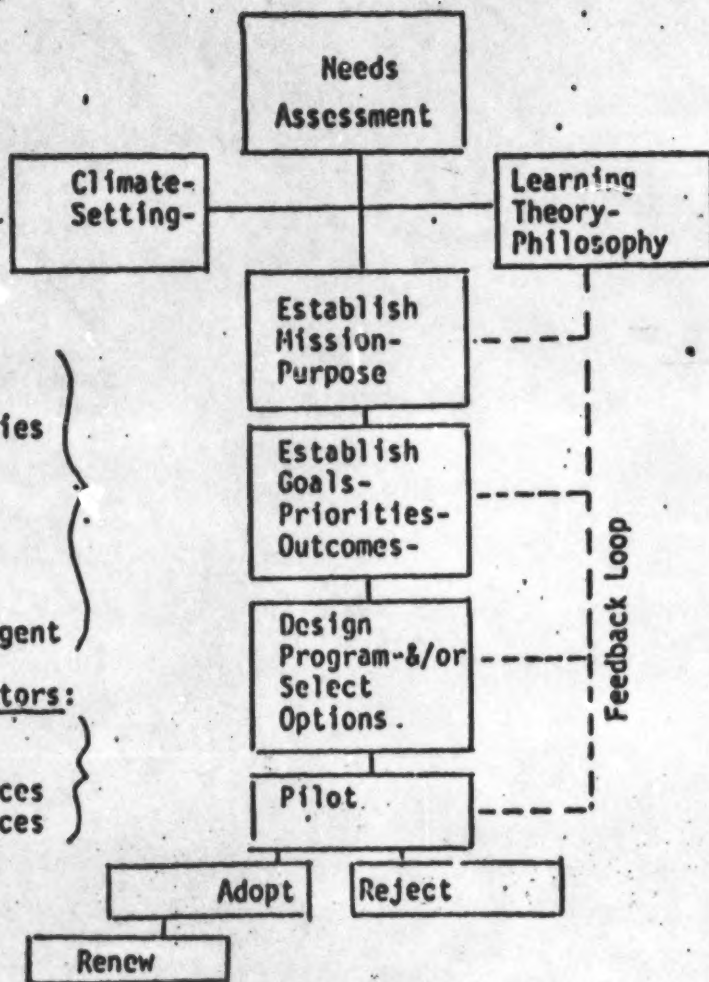
Culture Knowledge Base }

Legislature
Judiciary
Accrediting Agencies
Certification Requirements
Professional Organizations }

External Change Agent }

Institutional Factors:

Structure
Organization
Monetary Resources
Physical Resources }



INTERNAL FACTORS:

Mission Building
Communications
Decision-Making
Reward Structure
Leadership }

PERSONNEL

Administration
Faculty
Support Services
Students }

Figure 1

Composite, Systematic Educational Change Process

examined. The Composite, Systematic Educational Change Process utilized for this research is presented in Figure 1.

There are three components which constitute the initial phase of the process which involve the analysis of the setting and the cultural climate, needs assessments and finally the basic philosophy and learning theory upon which program improvements may be designed. It is these considerations upon which the program foundation is conceptualized. The quality of the conceptual foundation will ultimately influence the nature and internal consistency of my program designed to train school administrators.

The determination of the basic mission and the fundamental purpose to be accomplished by an institution may be defined in more meaningful and practical terms, and ultimately provide a clearer focus and direction for the program improvement or the change process, if derived from a strong conceptual framework. The fundamental concepts and identifiable needs upon which a program for change is to be built, as well as the mission and purpose to be served by an institution, need to come from the involved staff who develop, through the process, a sense of ownership accompanied by a clear understanding of the task to be accomplished.

The establishment of goals, priorities and measurable outcomes can follow the establishment and clarification of the institutional mission. The internal consistency of goals, priorities and measurable outcomes may be determined by reviewing them in light of fundamental assumptions, needs assessment data and the mission statement.

Program content, structure and methodology can be designed once goals, priorities and outcomes are specified. The content, structure and

methodology of programs designed to improve the quality of programs to train administrators can be assessed in terms of their consistency with mission and with the basic fundamental assumptions upon which the program was founded. It is at this stage of the Composite, Systematic Educational Change Process that it is possible to become involved with the adoption of a pre-tested product or with the designing of a program structured to meet a programmatic need. In the first instance, the Composite, Systematic Educational Change Process becomes an adoption model while in the latter instance it becomes a process for designing planned change.

Testing the product that was adopted, or piloting the process designed for program improvement, is the next phase of the Composite, Systematic Educational Change Process. In theory, the data that are gathered in the testing or piloting stage should provide information for determining future considerations with respect to the adoption of the pre-tested product or the implementation or rejection of the newly designed program or innovation. Assessment that follows the testing or piloting phase of the process is primarily summative in nature. Summative data should be supplemented by formative data gathered throughout the entire process from the first through the last phase.

Findings

The change process utilized in institutions highly involved in program development was substantially different than that of the less involved institutions.

Internal Influences

Mission building. Staff members in institutions that were most highly

involved with program development efforts were aware of the process of mission building in their institution and were aware of and generally supportive of their mission and its various components. By contrast, staff members from institutions with minimal involvement in program development were unclear, vague or made contradictory statements about the mission of their institutions and the process by which their mission was derived.

Needs Assessment. While personnel from innovative institutions were more receptive to the concept and involved in needs assessment efforts, more than their counterparts from institutions with minimal involvement in program development, it appeared that needs assessment was one of the least employed or accepted components of the systematic change model used in the institutions in which this investigation was conducted.

Decision Making. Noticeable differences existed among staff perceptions in the decision making process in schools of education actively involved in program development as contrasted to institutions where minimal program development was occurring. In schools of education where a high degree of program development was in evidence, there was a high level of staff involvement in what could be described as an open decision making process. In those institutions with low levels of program involvement, there were questions raised by staff about process and concerns expressed about a lack of involvement. In the latter schools there was a noticeable lack of staff ownership generated for programs.

Communications in schools of education where high levels of program development were in progress paralleled decision making patterns in which

staff were aware and involved. This was in stark contrast to those institutions that lacked a program development thrust where there existed interdepartmental antagonism, feelings of isolation and a flow of communications from the top down.

Leadership in the institutions that were involved in program development was perceived by staff as "cooperative" and "democratic." The deans in these schools were seen as having a leadership role that reached out into the profession and the political system in the state. Deans in schools with low levels of program development saw themselves and were perceived as being decision makers who communicated the decisions to the faculty. Administrators in both kinds of institutions were perceived as having a strong influence upon the involvement or lack of involvement that existed in the process of program development.

External Influences

Accreditation agencies were not seen by faculty as having a great influence in any of the schools involved in the study. However, in schools where program development was in progress, accreditation agencies were seen as a positive, helpful means to benefit the perceptions of persons outside the institution. In schools not highly involved with program development outside accreditation teams were seen as uninformed and of little or no positive value.

State certification requirements were not seen as any help or any problem by schools actively involved in program development. Faculty who were actively involved in program development perceived their programs were beyond certification minimums. Both institutions studied where little or

no program development was underway had faculty who viewed state accreditation requirements as creating a reactionary posture, and rather than accreditation standards fostering change in a positive way, they were seen as forcing compliance.

Court decisions and legislation were seen in all institutions as having an influence in bringing about change. However, in actively involved schools the perception of court decisions and legislation was generally positive, while in other schools faculty took a reactive and negative posture to this external influence.

Outside research and development funds were actively sought by staff members in both universities involved in the study. In the university in which staff members were highly involved with program development there was a linking of research and project efforts funded from outside sources with internal program development efforts. In the university in which a very low level of program development was in evidence there was a rather high level of involvement, verbalized by staff, in obtaining outside funding for research purposes but no indication that such outside funding had any impact on program development within their institution.

Professional organizations were viewed by staff from all four institutions involved in the study as a positive stimulus for professional growth.

Central administration was not seen in any of the involved schools as having a strong influence on the degree of involvement with program development.

Facilities were not viewed in any consistent pattern as having a

positive or negative influence on program development.

Faculty workload was not seen as a hindrance in schools where staff were highly involved in program development. In schools where little or no program development was in progress, faculty perceived their workload as an inhibitor and deterrent to program development.

Conclusions

The striking differences found in the innovative institutions, as contrasted to those in which there was little or no program development underway, was not fully expected. Nor was the fact that the climate differed so greatly in the two types of settings fully expected. While this study did not formally investigate climate, it was not possible to avoid being influenced by the numerous indicators that reflected the different climate patterns in the two types of institutions studied: innovative institutions had a much more positive climate than was found in those institutions where little or no program development was evidenced. The mood of the faculty in static institutions was negative. By contrast, there was enthusiasm and confidence exhibited among staff members in the institutions which were actively moving forward with program improvement efforts.

Where staff members were actively involved in program improvement efforts there was a rather close adherence to a systematic approach to carrying out planned change. While the Composite, Systematic Educational Change Process was not followed precisely, (the one most noticeable exception was in the use of needs assessments) it did constitute a workable approach to the examination of the change process. This is not to imply

a causal relationship. It is not known whether those responsible for change in innovative institutions were actually aware of the fact they were following the model or if they were proceeding on an intuitive base. Whatever the relationship, it can be concluded that in institutions actively involved in change there was an adherence to a systematic approach to change while in static institutions there was no evidence found to suggest that staff were attempting to utilize any structured process to the management of change.

There was no evidence in the findings of this research that would support the concept that to accomplish change or program improvement it is necessary to reorganize an institution. The nature of the organizational structure seemed to have little or no relationship to the amount of change taking place in any of the institutions studied. The quality of leadership was a theme that emerged throughout the findings. Positive leadership that tended to build an open working climate, fostered two-way communication, involved staff in decision making, utilized planned approaches to mission building and translated the reward structure to match needed priorities for program development was a variable that permeated all elements of innovative institutions. Leadership, much more than organization, takes on a major position of importance in the accomplishment of change.

With respect to the view that the findings reported by Brandt and Haney have simply verified well-known information about the change process, there remains a persistent set of questions. If the elements of change processes are so well known and understood by educational leaders, why

is it that so many instances can be found in which those who are responsible for program development look to outside interventions to bring about change? Why are there so many instances in which educational leaders seemingly ignore the "well known" steps involved in the management of change? Or why is it that there is such an abundance of evidence that those who try to bring about change mismanage the process? For example, if mission building were an obvious and accepted step in embarking upon a program to bring about change, why is it so frequently avoided as being unnecessary or too time consuming? If it is obvious that a clear statement of goals and objectives be established as one step in the change process, why is it that programs still exist for training school administrators in which staff are unaware, confused, or lacking agreement about goals and objectives? If organization has little impact upon program development, why is it that those responsible for program in schools of education demonstrate a reliance upon outside interventions to force reorganization with the hope that change in program will follow? If the process of managing change were so obvious and so well known, why is there so little evidence of change taking place in schools of education at a time when public opinion regarding education is waning and there is an open recognition of a loss of influence of higher education on public schools?

The educational enterprise is set in a dynamic society in which the rate of change has not been fully comprehensible. Leaders in education are faced with the complex task of maneuvering programs within a highly bureaucratized system which does not foster change. The process is further

compounded by the fact that education functions within a pluralistic society so that many diverse demands are placed upon the system. The demands for change, and the setting within which those demands are being made, make it imperative that educational leaders in higher education demonstrate the knowledge and skill in managing planned change and that they also teach those who are to be responsible for the education of our children and youth to be expert in the management of planned change.

Footnotes

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